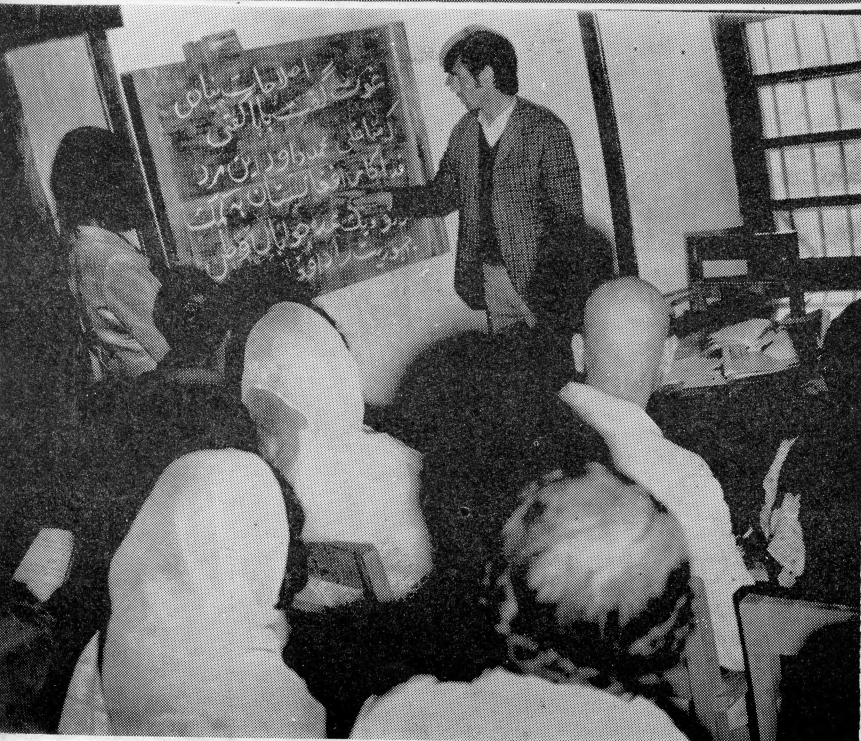
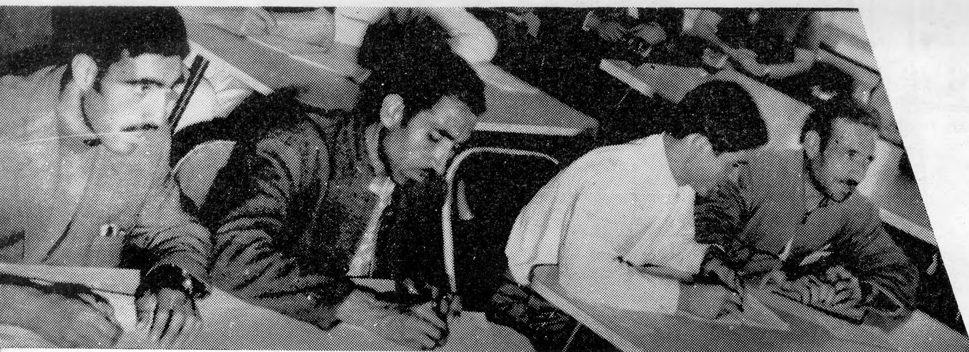


LITERACY EDUCATION IN AFGHANISTAN

BY A STAFF REPORTER



"THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY CAMPAIGN IS TO EXTEND LITERACY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, AND EXPAND AND POPULARIZE ADULT EDUCATION AMONG THE MASSES, IN PARTICULAR AMONG THOSE WHO DIRECTLY PARTICIPATE IN PRODUCTIVE WORKS."



Prevalence of illiteracy seriously affects the soci-economic life of the people, and Afghanistan gives eradication of illiteracy priority treatment.

To this end in early 1973, a special department was established within the Prime Ministry. With proclamation of the new order in the country, on August 17, 1973, the operational programmes of this department were approved by the state and the department was called the National Institute for Literacy Campaign.

The Institute now operating in the framework of the Ministry of Education, is to extend literacy throughout the country and expand and popularize adult education among the masses, in particular among those who directly participate in productive works and consequently raise economic and social standards of living. The process of literacy education is coupled with improving and increasing skills and profficiency.

Before the establisnment of the new order in the country, the campaign against illiteracy was concentrated in the agricultural areas of Kohdaman and Baghlan. The campaign, then, was sponsored by the General Directorate for Functional Literacy and Adult Education.

Now, the personnel enaged in the campaign are divided into two groups: administrative and professional.

The administrative personnel of the Institute carry out the jobs concerned with administration, finance and so on, while the professional personnel are busy with various affairs such as producing reading materials, survey and assessment, training new personnel, field activities, and the like. They carry out these tasks under the guidance of directors and supervisors.

Beside the capital city, the Institute is mostly active in Baghlan, Lugar, Jauzjan, Paktia, provinces and Kunar and Kohdaman areas. It should be mentioned that in Baghlan, Kunar and Lugar literacy courses include agricultural education and promoting co-operative activities.

"More than 11,000 people attend the courses held by the Institute throughout the country," says a source of the Agency.

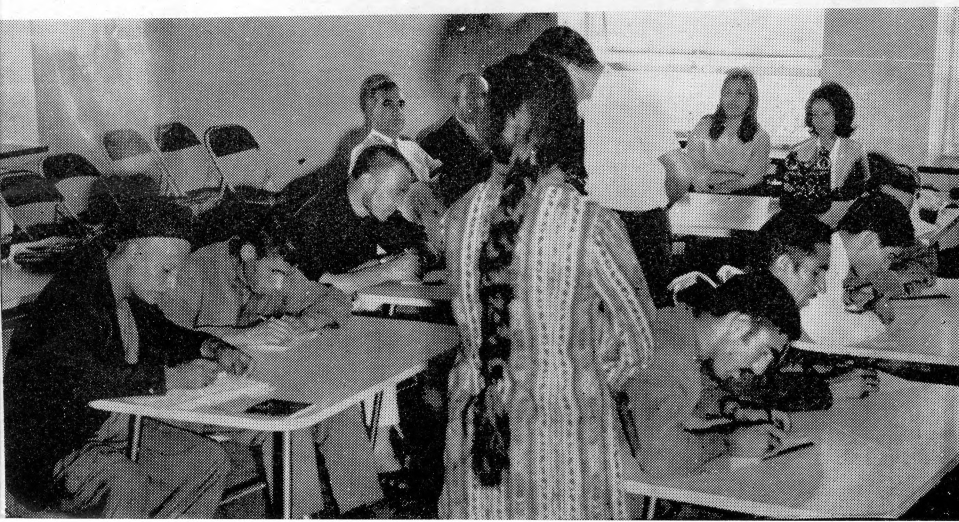
To what extent the endeavours of the Institute have, so far, been successful?

"Because the Agency is at a primary stage of its activities," says the Institute source, "and because most of its efforts are experimental, it will be premature to assess the activities so far. Of course, the future developments will provide the answer to this question."

How many courses have been newly opened this year by the Istitute?

"Since the beginning of the Afghan year (mid March 1976) more than 120 new courses have been activated in the capital," replies the source. "The situation is different in the provinces for the majority of the attendants in the provinces are farmers and agricultural workers whose time during the spring and summer is occupeid by field work. Therefore, their courses operate in late November, and we do not know, for the time being, that for how many new courses the need will be felt".

Enrolling for the courses of the Institute entails no diffecult conditions and everybody, 15 to 54 years, willing to learn to read and write, can attend freely.





By A.H.W.

Autumn is "the season of mist and mellow friut-fulness" as described by a British romantic poet. It is the season of mellow fruitfulness par excellance in Afghanistan not of mist.

Exports of fresh and dried fruits account for almost 22% of exports from Afghanistan.

Blessed, with a varied climates, from tundra in the Pamirs to the sub-tropical in Nangarhar, Afghanistan can grow and export a wide range of fruits and vegetables.

GRAPES

Actually, the only fruit which could be compared with human milk is grapes. But ironically, "the best grapes are devoured by jackals," as the adage goes in this country. This is easy to explain because jackals can easily get to these bunches by creeping through apertures in the walls surrounding vineyards and the range of their choice is evidently wide enough. This is figuratively used in the case of ugly men having beautiful wives invoking envy in others.

According to an account given by Aruzi Samarkandi in his "Char Maqala which literarily means "The Four Essays", there existed about 60 varieties of grapes in Herat. On the basis of another narrative, Herat was the birth-place of grapes. In other words, it was in Herat where grapes were grown for the first time.

It is said that the local monarch helped a big bird, probably an eagle, to get free from a snare or something and the bird brought grape seeds to the same site next year. The monarch, saw the bird dropping something from its beak and beaconing to the men. It was clear it had brought something as a present. The monarch sent someone to make sure what it was. He showed him a couple of seeds which the monarch gave to his chief gardener to sow. The next year, they saw green leaves covering the whole spot. They waited for three or four years till the vines bore fruit. One of the men hesitantly tasted this new fruit and then sang praises for it to the monarch. And grapes spread from Herat to other parts of the world, or so goes the story.

There are, today, at least 30 varieties of grapes in Herat, some of which so tender and juicy that are to be consumed inside the vineyards as they cannot reach homes, let alone the market-place.

Yet the most important type of grapes grown in Herat is known as "laal" which should resemble rubis in colour but strangely enough is white. According to one version, there is a red type of laal which is erroneously called "Kandahari" in Kabul and the adjoining province of Parwan.

Actually Kandahar stands next to Herat as far as variety and quality of grapes are concerned. Maybe, this will not be very diplomatic to say because people from these two important provinces are rather jealous about their fruits. At any rate, the best type of grapes grown in Kandahar is called "Sayebi" which is red in colour and very sweet. I presume it has been named after a famous poet, Sayeb, who visited Kandahar briefly when both Kabul and Kandahar formed part of a single empire. However, Sayeb spent more time in Kabul about which he wrote a famous ode.

In Kabul and Parwan provinces, "Husseini" is the dominant tpye of grapes and the Husseinis coming from Goldara, "The Flower Valley", in Kohdaman area are the best.

However, Kandahar has presented to Kohdaman its "Shindo Khani" type which yields the best green raisins always priced higher on world markets. More and more people in Kohdaman are now growing Shindo Khanis to replace the "kishmishi" type which are comparatively less productive or low-priced.

Since Afghanistan can export annually only about 40,000 tons of raisins, it has to send truck-loads of grapes to the Indian sub-continent every year. The time has come to despatch lots of grapes to the Gulf states through air-conditioned containers to raise the income of grape producers considerably. I think the cooperatives by joining their forces could buy one or two containers in due course to achieve this end.

Raisins are made in two ways: by drying grapes in the sun and by hanging grape bunches from ropes in the shade. The product of the first process is called red and the latter green. Since green raisins are produced with greater expense, they cost more on the market.

Fortunately, the Raisins Export Promotion Institute, under the guidance of the Republican Regime has recently fixed the minimum, price of one kilo of red raisins at Afs. 12.50

What do you Know About Afghan Fruits?



to protect the producers against the manipulations of middlemen.

On the other hand, under Fruit and Vegetables Programme the Agriculture Ministry encourages farmers to build more orchards and vineyards by helping within cooperation of the World Food Programme.

MELONS AND WATERMELONS

According to another adage, "Among the fruits, the monarch is the grapes and the sultan is the melon" Some people even prefer melons to grapes but it is all a matter of taste.

The writer remembers the "sauz maghz" and "barge naye" types of melons coming to Kabul from Logar and Deh Sabz areas years ago but they have vanished into thin year now because better but different varieties of melons coming from northern provinces dominate the market.

The type of melons that ripen earlier than others is known as "qandak" from Hazrat Imam in Kunduz. It is smaller in size compared with another Kunduz variety, "Asqalani," but presumably the sweetest of all. And they cost a lot more because no other type can compete with it or is available in the Market.

Apart from qandak and asqalani, another highly appreciated melon comes from Khulm, Samangan province. It is called "amiri" and is white in colour, in contrast with the two varieties described above which have a yellow layer on top and are green for the rest.

However, two types of melons grown and consumed in Fariab as they are too tender to be sent to Kabul, let alone export them, are the best in the whole northern provinces. They are tender and juicy but also have a pleasant fragrance. Most people do not like to eat things which exude fragrance but not these melons that should be consumed either on the spot or nearby.

The tenderness of Maimana melons could be judged from this that by walking along their plants, you see with your own eyes cracks caused in the melons.

Many farmers have made experiments with seeds brought from Kunduz, Mazar and Maimana to grow them elsewhere but to no avail. For instance, they grow so well in Helmand province where summer is rather hot and the soil equally rich but the melons so produced are no as sweet or tender.

The biggest and juiciest water-melons are grown in Chakhnasoor, Nimroz province. They are so big that they load two of them on a donkey's back. However, these water-melons have too many seeds as do those coming to Kabul from Kailagaye near Pule Khumri in northern Afghanistan. The latter type is perhaps the second best but these occasinally contain what they popularly call "roots" which spoil the fun.

Nowadays, the best water-melons come from Helmand province where farmers are using the seeds of an American variety with dark green skins. These are red, sweet and juicy and could be bought pre-tasted.

Both of these fruits are exported to the sub-continent on trucks. It is hoped that one day after the completion of railways in this country, Afghanistan will be able to export tons of these to Iran and the Gulf states.

APPLES

The adage "an apple a day keeps the doctor away" was understood if not frequently acted upon by the people in this country since old days. Those who visited patients used to take them a few apples, and the redder they were, the better. "Malangs," Afghanistan's own breed of hippies, used to carry one or two red apples in their hands when they walked on the streets or met important people. A malang often presented an apple to a rich merchant or a high functionary of state and received in return a gift of expensive things or simply cash.

Housewives who did not bear children used to solicit a certain malang's help which was often forthcoming in the form of an apple, usually prescribed to be eaten half and half by the wife and her husband.

Close resemblance is also expressed in terms of apples. For instance, if the father and his son or two brothers closely resemble each other, they are said to be two halves of an apple.

At any rate, the best apples used to come from Badakhshan province known as "nazuk badan" which means "tender-bodied." This type was rare because the distance between Kabul and Faizabad prohibited the saplings to reach in good conditions.

It was discovered later that this type could be found in other areas with the same climate and therefore people with orchards took pains to bring sapplings which are now forming the bulk of apple trees gradually coming to fruition.

Kohdaman again claimed the top place with its "golaye" type, a red and white apple which is not only tender and juicy but also highly economical as each trees hundreds of apples if not thousands.

However, the Ministry of Agriculture in recent years imported varieties of apple trees from Beirut, Tehran, etc. to increase those types which bore more fruit and were resistant to certain diseases providing these were sprayed, pruned and fertilised properly. The initiators of this program was Dr. Abdul Wakil who has obtained his Ph. D. in horticulture from Britain and who once served as Minister of Agriculture.

This fine practical scholar now owns an orchard in Maidan which serves the local farmers like a demonstration farm. His efforts in Qargha near Kabul have resulted in vast nurseries of apples, pears and plums sold to individual farmers by the thousands every year. Because Kabul and the adjoining areas like Qargha, Maidan, Arghandeh, etc. which have a temperate climate are most suited to apple orchards, Dr. Wakil has been helping the farmers to plant apples and look forward to huge profits in the near future when their product goes to the market. He also supervises pruning, spraying and fertilizing these trees to guide the farmers who are his customers.

Actually, the owenr of an apple orchard does not have to look for customers. The customers look for him as the product of every orchard it booked far in advance. Now the new orchards consist of a variety of apples including Sweet Williams and Red Delicious.

PEACHES

There are four main varieties of peaches: "gurbasars" which mean "cat's heads" that are grown in Kohdaman. These are larger than other types and come in pink and white hues. Kandaharis are smaller and half pink half yellowish, "Bushqabis" which means "Plate-likes" were imported from Soviet Union and are indeed flat and rather green in colour. The orange-coloured peaches which are strangely enough the same hue inside and out. These are larger than other types except gurbasars and much in demand because they can reach the market in a better shape. These are perhaps imports from California or Italy.

Peach tree are not as durable as say apple trees because they grow gummy and most of their branches break under the weight of their fruit. Owners of peach trees in Herat grow them in parallel lines, cutting one row after a number of years and aletting the other bear fruit alternatively. One tree could be cut off the ground as many times as one desires providing the graft is not spoiled.

PEARS

Originally, Badakhshan was also famous for its pears known as "nashpati" which are still popular among the connoisseurs. In Andarab, they grow another type which is smaller in size but is equally tender and juicy.

However, Dr. Wakil grows pears which represent the best types raised abroad. Farmers in Kabul and the adjoining areas buy hundreds of pear saplings from his nurseries every year and Kabul province will soon rival both Badakhshan and Andarab as far as delicious pears are concerned.

APRICOTS

Ghorband and Kahmard are famous for their appricots but Kohdaman and Chardehi do not lag behind. There are varieties of apricots grown in these areas. The most famous

brands are: "qaisis" which are half pink and half yellow in colour, "amiris" which are only white but much larger in size and far more juicier if left to ripen well, **"zardaloos"** which are yellow in colour and these are in turn subdivided in two types, those with edible kernels and **the other type with bitter** nuts.

Apricots are much cheaper than other fruits especially when these are in full season and one buys the yellow type. Dried apricats are exported in large quantities from Kandahar known as "shakar paras" which means "sugar flakes". These are of **course produced from spe**cial trees bearing smaller fruit.

PLUMS

There are varities of plums in Afghanistan but the most famous are "kok sultans" which could not be literally translated. However, these are much **larger than other plums** and much juicier and tastier too. Their colour is a mixture of green, yellow and red and are consumed when they are unripe, half-ripe and fully ripe.

MULBERRIES

Mulberry trees grow almost everywhere in Afghanistan where the altitude is not prohibitive and lots of fresh as well as dried mulberries are consumed annually. The most popular type is "brayem Khani" which is dark red and pink in colour, though "shasti" has more sugar contents, perhaps 60% as calculated by Abdul Ali Nawabi, a horticuture expert.

NUTS

The best almonds come from Khulm whose shells can be cracked with hands. Other areas famous for this product are Ghorband and Kalat. Walnuts grow in all colder climes, mostly in Badakhshan, Nooristan, **Uruzegan, etc. In Ghorband** they have in recent years introduced what they locally "English Walnuts" which are dwarfish trees bearing fruit on top when they are only two years of age. "Jalghozas" or pine nuts grow in Pakteya and Nijrab.

OTHER FRUITS

Other fruits like quinces, figs, oranges, tangerines and a cross-breed of both called "kinos" as well as locats and palm dates abound in Nangrhar. However, the best figs come **from Khulm area.**

Both Kandahar and Khulm are famous for their pomegrenates of the sweet-sour type while Tagab in Kapisa is renowned for its rather sweet and so-called seedless pomegrenates. The pomegrenates from Khugyani area in Nangarhar, though limited in quantity, command the market in the sub-continent.

The advantage of pomegrenates lies in its rather thick protective skin which takes much wear and tear on the way as it reaches places as distant as Calcutta.

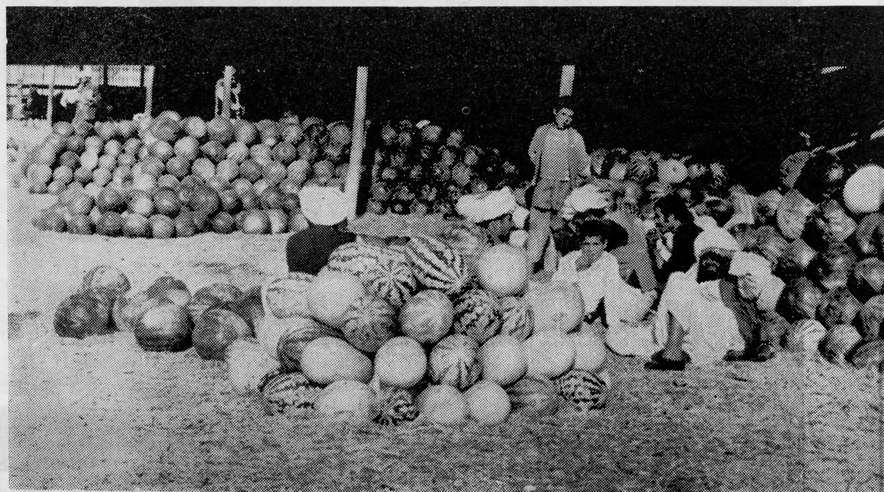
Figs are also dried and sold like lis, as so many **are strung around a string** and most of these come from Kandahar and Khulm. Actually, these two places compete with each other in both quality and quantity of various fruits, though Khulm was recently dealt a rather hard blow because of earthquakes caused by an unbelievably simple phenomenon; water seeping through calcarious veins in the gorge leading to this productive as well as scenic valley shaking these mountains fairly well to result in **both tremors and land**slides, the latter blocking the main road to northern provinces passing through the gorge.

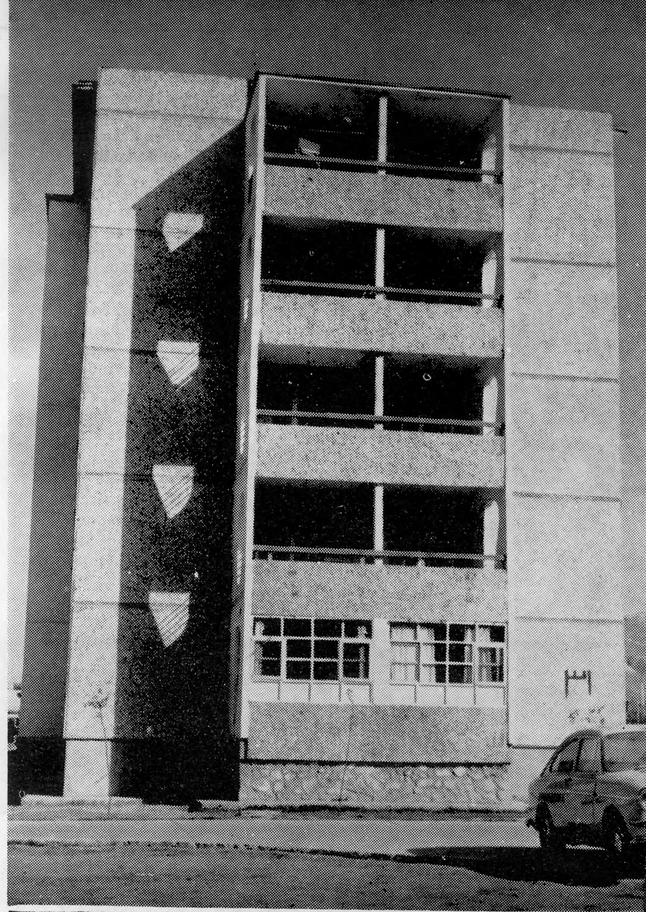
Since Afghans like both fresh and dried fruits very much, they consume the bulk of their products **in both forms. Even melons** are dried and stored for winter which taste good with "pilua", depending on the chef.

Dried apples and quinces are cooked with meat to serve as side dishes with rice preparations. These are known as "qailas" which should be a Tukic appellation.

The fact that most Afghans living in mountain valleys are healthy and hence live longer than citified pale faces is attributed to plenty of excercise, plenty of fresh air, plenty of fruits and plenty of natural nourishments such as milk, butter, yoghurt, etc. Also, they consume lots of vegetables, raw or cooked.

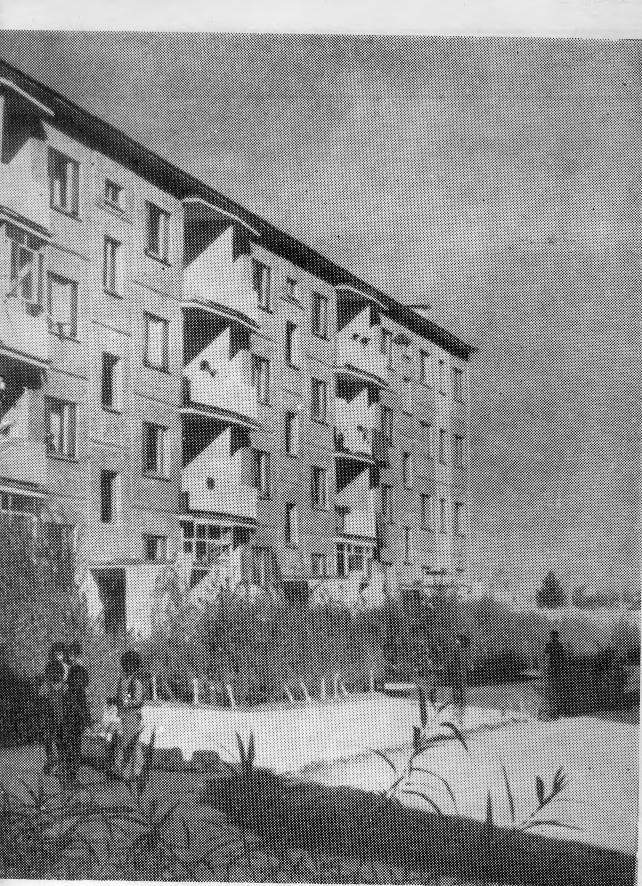








Somewhat Different From The Rest



The new system of housing has brought about a new way of life for a number of people in the capital. Indeed, life is somewhat different inNader Shah Menah.

By A Staff writer

One of the pressing problems the underdeveloping countries are facing, is housing.

In urban centres of Afghanistan, about twenty years ago, great social and economic changes occurred as thousand of people moved form the rural areas to cities in the hope of a better standard of living. This created housing problems which were intensified by the increase in original population of the cities. The population of the urban areas increased also, because of availability of a better medical service, rising of the standard of living and higher standards of education. Moreover, expanding of the state activities required more and more civil servants. A number of these civil servants had come from the rural parts of the country, and had been employed, after finishing their education, by various state organisations.

To cope with the problem of habitation, the government. drew up and carried out a number of projects one of which was building of apartment-houses in the eastern part of the capital.

Though planned some years ago, the building of the first block of this project was started in 1965. This new residential area which was called Nader Shah Menah, covers a space of more than fourty hectares.

The general project, at the very outset, had been divided into some sub-projects which was to be built in a step by step process. The sub-projects no. 1 and no. 2 which included 66 blocks, took some seven years to complete. Beside these blocks, in the course of these years, a number of educational and cultural constructions, like school, kindergarten, swimming pool, coffee-house, market center, were also built.

Of the 66 blocks, eight houses government departments while the remainings have been occupied by families. The total number of people living in this district is 15,000 or 5,000 more than what had been foreseen.

The blocks of the project, equipped with central heating system, canalisation, running water, electricity and so on, have been constructed in a modern style.

Each block includes 2, 3, 4, and 5 rooms apartments, and families apply for them according to their need and rate of incomes. In the third sub-project the work of which was started two years ago, there will also be apartments with six and seven rooms. Every apartment, no matter how many



"Not to bother neighbours, we know what to do. And we do behave in that way, because we are sure their behaviour will be the same towards us".





Somewhat Different From The Rest

rooms it has, includes a bath-room and a kitchen.

Apartments are sold to people on instalments payable in twenty-five years. Besides the instalments, inhabitants have to pay a special sum for maintainance services.

With the beginning of this project, a new method of construction, prefabrication, was introduced and successfully applied in Afghanistan. This method not only accelerates the process of construction, but also saves human power and energy. The finished parts are produced by the Housing Factory operating in the framework of the Ministry of Public Works. This factory facing practically a standstill during the years 1969-70-71, was re-activated after the new order was proclaimed in Afghanistan.

The new system of housing brought about a new way of life for a number of people in the capital. Indeed, life is somewhat different in Nader Shah Menah from the rest of the city. Though some appartment-houses existed in Kabul in the past years, but they were usually occupied by foreigners. Moreover, their number was limited.

Appartment living, has its merits and its restrictions. The inhabitants of the appartments have lost part of their freedom while found an access to a number of conveniences. The newcomers, at the start, face some difficulties in adopting themselves with the new conditions of appartment life. But gradually with the passing of time, they understand how to enjoy their new houses, and how to behave with their neighbours. "Not to bother neighbours. we know what to do. And we do behave in that way, because we're sure their behaviour will be the same towards us", as one of the inhabitants said to me.




Where They Learn Crafts

By: A Staff Writer

The Crafts School of Kabul so far, has graduated 1167 technical hands and skilled persons. Presently 370 students are enrolled in different departments of the school.

The school, opened in 1923, functioned during the early years of its establishment as a painting centre, it was later named as fine arts school before it came to be known by its adopted its present status.

During the early days of its establishment the school faced some uphill tasks. After the brief turmoil of 1949 the school was reactivated in 1959 having a modern look. With a fresh beginning made the school still had a very limited number of teachers and only two departments namely tailoring and carpentry. Gradually five new departments were added to the school as demanded by the growing needs of the country. Thus swelling its student body.

The school has beside carpentry and tailoring, art, architecture, printing, ceramic and knitting section. All the subjects taught in the school aim at best versing a student in a profession so that on graduation he can directly handle the job assigned to him. Most accomplished teachers are engaged in teaching the students. The school also provides scholarships to the bright students for travelling abroad and pursuing higer studies.

The art graduates of the school have many prospects. Besides being recruited by the government organisations they can if they like join the fine arts department of Kabul University as a student after appearing in the entry examination. Similarly the carpentry and architecture graduates of the school if they intend to follow higher studies can join Assistant Engineers Institute for 13th and 14th grades.

Not long ago the school had German teachers from Federal Republic of Germany teaching alongside the Afghan teachers. Fortunately with the passage of time our countrymen have themselves achieved sufficient profficiency in various subjects to replace the foreigners and now no longer any foreigner is teaching at the school. Local teachers are the graduates of the school who have obtained higher studies in Federal Republic of Germany.

The school located in Karteh-Chahr also has a dormitory in which a large number of the students reside. Both the girls and boys are welcomed to the school. And the percentage of girls in the tailoring course is higher. The graduates of eighth grade are admitted to the school after they pass entry examination and interview. In the ninth grade they are taught all compulsory subjects with one optional depending on their choice, the final examination of the ninth grade then decides which branch a student will be studying depending on



Autumn 1976

ARYANA

(AFGHANISTAN REPUBLIC)





A CORDIAL EMBRACE MENT



RECEIVING THE CHAMPIONSHIP CUP FROM PRESIDENT



THE BIG BATTLE BROKE OUT AGAIN!

SEE NEXT PAGE



IN THE THICK OF THE BATTLE



merit and general knowledge test. After their selection the students go to the department assigned and study for three years before graduating.

The seven departments of the school have very limited seats and therefore the students admitted come after a very tough selection competition. Following is a brief account of different departments of the school:

ART AND CERAMIC DEPARTMENT

This department was added to the school in 1958 and has both men and women teachers with high qualifications. The department in fact trains teachers for primary and secondary schools for painting, Sculpturing and ceramic. This department has two main sections:

1. Drawing and painting section.
2. Sculpturing section.

CARPENTRY DEPARTMENT

The Carpentry Department was created in 1954 when the school was reactivated on modern lines. This is one of the largest departments of the school having a lion's share in the activities of the school and having the largest number of graduates. The Carpentry Department besides training the students also produces largest quantities of wood works. During the first year a student learns the fundamentals of carpentry while in the second year he is able to ma-







ke tables and chairs. The students are also taught here carving and wood engraving.

WEAVING DEPARTMENT

Keeping in view the shortage of skilled hands in the textile industry, the Ministry of Education introduced the weaving department in the school in 1958 in order to increase the trained personnel in the country. The graduates of this department are hired by the Gulbahar, Pule Khumri, Bagrami and Woolen Textile Factories. There are thirty students enrolled in the department with two teachers. The department produces various kinds of cloth. Of late carpet weaving has also been introduced.

PRINTING DEPARTMENT

The printing section of the school has numerous modern machines on which the students are trained. The department has both off-set and letter-presses and also binding section which teaches various stages of binding a book. The department also has a photographic section. The printing department was added to the school in 1961.

TAILORING DEPARTMENT

The tailoring section of the school began function in 1954 and now has a long list of students. It is divided into two sections, 1. Women tailoring and 2. Men tailoring. The women graduates of the school are recruited in the women's schools as tailoring teachers.

The crafts school has been very successful in meeting its projected aim, its graduates everywhere have given very promising results. Since the establishment of the new order more and more attention is being paid to the industrial development in Afghanistan, the role of the industrial school has become ever more important as its graduates will be shouldering a grave responsibility in the development of the country.



DISCOVERY OF THE FIRST BUDDHIST MEDITATION GROTTO IN AFGHANISTAN




Ananda, the famous deciple of Buddha (left), and Maitrayaniputra, also a Buddha's deciple (right). The images, practically intact, have been painted on the walls inside the Grotto.

BY DR. ZMARIALAI TARZI

During the tenth round of excavations carried out at Tape Shutur, Hadda, by Afghan archaeologists, the first Buddhist ornate meditation and pondering grotto was discovered. The grotto, specified by letter "A", is unparalleled and has no equal in this part of Asia.

This rare find can be, on one hand, considered as an endorsement of those historians who believed, on the basis of written documents, that there should have been Buddhist meditation grottos in Afghanistan. On the other hand, this important discovery, can be construed as an authentic guide for study of grottos found already in Central Asia, and correcting incertitudes about them. Because grottos discovered in Khotan, Kachghar, Qizil, Kotcha, and other places of Central Asia, can not be considered Meditation Grottos in the absence of authentic indications. Hence, this new discovery of Afghan archaeologists has opened a new phase in historical researches on the Greco-Buddhic Civilization.

During the tenth round of excavations at Tape Shutur, while excavating an outer part of the basement of rooms number 26 and 27, we came accross the upper part of the entrance of a Grotto. After finding the passageway, which led us inside through a staircase, the process of excavation advanced very slowly, because the Grotto had been severely affected by moisture and passing of time. We even found it unwise to use conventional equipments for excavations.

The Grotto we saw, after finishing the work, was a room with a length of 9.60 m., a width of 2.85 m., and a height of 2.20 m. The roof of the room is in the form of a long arch, and the room itself has been carved during the fourth century A.D. inside a conglomerate rock of the third geological period. The Grotto may have been damaged by penetration of water. It was repaired during the sixth century, and the present wall-paintings also belong to this same century.

Though the paintings have been damaged and in part destroyed, a brief ex-



Image No. 5, Maudgayana, one of the deciples of Buddha (left). Decorative paintings seen on the upper sections of the walls of the Grotto. Amongst the leaves, flowers and branches there are also seen fruits and phallis (bellow).

planation is presented here:

In the lower sections of the walls a series of decorative paintings are placed side by side. The paintings have a variety of colors on the wall opposite to the entrance, while they are black and white on the remaining three walls. Over these paintings, with exception of the northeastern wall, there are seen foliages amongst whose leaves, flowers and branches are seen fruits and phallis.

Over these murals except the southwestern wall where the entrance is located, images of Buddha's ten desciples have been painted. Eight of these images are almost intact while only part of clothes of the ninth person has remained and the tenth follower's image is completely destroyed.

The followers, dressed as monks, are sitting under trees over plants with small flowers. They are from left to right: Upoli, Ananda, Maitrayaniputra, Kasiapa, Maudgalyayana, Sariputra, Anirudda, and Subhuti.

How did we idetify these followers?

Very easily: their names are written in Brahmi letters beside each person. And this leaves no place for any doubt concerning their identification.

One of the scientifically valuable figures in Grotto-A is a standing skeleton representing death. The skeleton, placed between image number five and image number six, is seen on the wall opposite to the entrance.

This skeleton is supposed to be painted so that attention of the monks who gathered in the Grotto for meditation and pondering be attracted to human life from pre-creation stage to the final stage-the decayed corpse. The skeleton was to teach and preach the monks to avoid pleasures and enjoyment of the material life and seek seclusion, as senior followers of Buddha had done before, in order to reach supreme spritual salvation.

For these and other reasons, discovery of Grotto-A is not only one of the most significant archaeological discoveries of pre-Islamic period of Afghanistan but of Asia.

KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION IN AFGHANISTAN



BY A STAFF REPORTER

There are eleven kindergartens operting in the capital and fourteen in the provinces during the current year, according to a source of the General Directorate of Kindergartens, Women's Institute.

More than 2,000 children attend kindergartens in various parts of Kabul while, due to lack of precise statistics, the source could not number children attending kindergartens in the provinces.

Kindergartens all over the country are financed by government's subsidy and fees paid by children's families. No discrimination exists in accepting native or foreign children in kindergartens, but, each kindergarten can only admit certain number of children. However, those children whose mothtrs are busy with jobs outside their homes, are given a priority.

Essential reforms have been introduced to kindergartens since the begining of the current year. On the basis of these reforms, teachrs graduating from the Vocational High School of Women's Institute attend cources at the Teachers Training College in order to attain up—to—date information on children's psychology, and qualify for kindargarten teaching.

To feed the children, kindergartens in Afghanistan receive aid from the Ministry of Public Health and World Food Organisation.

In response to the large demand, the General Directorate of Kindergartens has determined to, within the country's seven year plan, establish more kindergartens with modern equipments and facilities in various parts of the country.

The oldest kindergarten in Afghanistan was established about thirty years ago which is now called the Central Kindergarten and is the largest in the country.

All kindergartens except Central and Nader Shah Menah, accept childr-













en of 3 to 6 years age. The two mentioned ones due to having nursries take care of infants as well.

Experience reveals that children coming to school after kindergarten, are more adept at learning than those who attend classes directly from their homes.

Meeting the children in kindergartens, one can readily notice that they love their kindergartens, the friends they have made, and their teachers.

They are quite familiar with their kindergartens. When they come to their kindergartens in the morning, they exchange greetings with their teachers and their friends. Then they start, with great joy, their pleasont day. The garden of the kindergarten fills with happy cries and mirthful noises. Movement and action is seen every where, and the silent atmosphere is changed into a lively and moving one. An atmosphere mostly desired by any little child everywhere of the world.

"May I ask you a question?" I stopped a running little girl.

"Yes sir," she stopped staring at me with questioning eyes.

"What's your name?" I asked.

"I'm Fareeha" she answered.

"What do you learn here?"

"A lot of things," she said, laughing "Songs, stories, dance, and a lot of things".

Her playmate, a little boy, was curiously watching me. "What's your name?" I asked him.

"My name's Masoud," he answered.

"Do you like this place?"

"Yes sir,", he hurriedly answered.

"Why do you like this place?" I questioned him.

"One can get a lot of amusements here, sir... A lot.."

I let them join their friends delightfully running around, and said to myself, "What a wonderful world they have, those children!"

"THE FOREIGN STUDENTS OF THE KABUL UNIVERSITY MAKE THEIR OWN CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNIVERSITY'S ACADEMIC AND NON—ACADEMIC LIFE. THE AFGHAN STUDENTS FIND AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN ABOUT MANY PEOPLES AND DIFFERENT CULTURES OF OUR WORLD".

On the campus of the Kabul University

YOSHIDA, A JAPANESE STUDENT, HAS RECENTLY BEGUN TO LEARN DARI LANGUAGE. HE CAN SPEAK SO MUCH, NOW, TO MAKE HIMSELF UNDERSTOOD. HIS PLAN IS TO WORK ON THE AFGHAN FOLKLORE. "I'LL LEARN DARI SUFFICIENTLY VERY SOON", YOSHIDA BELIEVES.





BY A STAFF REPORTER

124 foreign students study in different faculties of Kabul University. They belong to various countries: Iran, Jurdan, United States, Britain, Japan, Poland Brazil etc.

According to a source of the Kabul University foreign students, wishing to study here, are introduced to the University through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Some of the students have come here under cultural agreements between Afghanistan and their concerned governments, while the others continue their studies privately. The private students should forward applications and receive formal admission.

In the past few years 30 foreign students have graduated and attained their degrees, the source explained.

Students who are going to continue their studies at the Kabul University, must be able to provide a valid document proving they have finished high-school Their documents are assessed by an authoritative committee of the University.

Students are accepted at the Universtiy according to the allotments for various countries. Those having a scholarship from the University recieve stipends from the Government of Afghanistan.

* * *

Nedialko Mikhailov Nedialkov is one of the students who has come here on the basis of the cultural exchanges agreement between Afghanistan and Bulgaria, Nedialkov, studying Dari language and literature, has planned to work at the National Liberary of Bulgaria after ending of his studies in Afghanistan.

Nedialkov is more interested in Dari grammer, and has been attracted by works of Afghan writers, Rosta Bakhtari, Assadullah Habib. He talks Dari virtually as a native borne.

"Among my Afghan friends I don't feel I'm a stranger," says Nedialkov.

"SOME OF THE STUDENTS HAVE COME HERE UNDER CULTURAL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN AFGHANISTAN AND THEIR CONCERNED GOVERNMENTS, WHILE THE OTHERS CONTINUE THEIR STUDIES PRIVATELY."



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THE BIG BATTLE BROKE OUT AGAIN!

BY AFZAL NASIR

The twelve day Grand Buzkashi tournament came to an end with a special prize distribution ceremony in which the chapandazes (horsemen) were honoured for their meticulous feat and the trophy was awarded to this year's champions, the defiant Balkh team.

The traditional buzkashi games were opened this year as usual amid a colourful ceremony in the presence of President and Prime Minister Mohammad Daoud, Cabinet Members, members of the Central Committee and high ranking government and military officials at Ghazi Stadium. Large crowds of spectators were also present to witness the opening ceremony.

The buzkashi tournament is held every year in the country under the auspices of Afghan National Olympic Committee and is played under a strict set of rules. Any breach of rule during the game adds to the defaults and a team which scores most of the points as a result of defaults of its rival, wins the game in an allotted period of time. Buzkashi as the name denotes in Dari means 'dragging of goat'. Usually a calf is beheaded, soaked in water for 24 hours to stand the strenuous pulls and grabs. The players are divided in different teams wearing long robes (chapans) and on horseback begin the gruelsome task of placing the calf in a marked circle or a 'goal' which is there for each side.

Buzkashi is one of the fiercest and most adventurous games played in the world. The vehement nature of the game and the furious competitiveness makes it more thrilling than the violent bullfighting in ancient Roman courts. With the passage of time buzkashi has been refined and shackled by a set of rules in order to give it a modern look and also to maintain its old grandeur. The game dates back to 13th century a.d. in Afghanistan, and is guessed to have originated as a war game underlying the toughness of the soldiers.

Buzkashi is most popular in northern provinces of Afghanistan and it is there that best horses are found. Grooming and training a good colt is very costly and a person owning a few good stallions is considered to have a big fortune. The game is thus very costly and needs a lot of bred horses who can retain the stamina needed to play a game or two at a time. The chapandazes (horsemen) are also hardy and sturdy men and are reared from the childhood to become a buzkashi player.

The buzkashi season begins from early autumn and lasts till mid winter in the northern provinces. While in Kabul the game is played in October and attracts a large number of spectators who throng the stadium to see their favourite horses and teams in action. The tourists visiting Afghanistan time their arrival to give them an opportunity to witness this rare sport. In midwinter the matches are also played in Kunduz and Balkh. In Kunduz the natural landscape near the city, a kind of bowl, is the best arena for buzkashi, the horses have ample of place to run at full speed, also the Shadeyan desert of Balkh is a good site for buzkashi providing unlimited and smooth field for the horses.

Although the Ghazi Stadium in Kabul is comparatively small as to be called a buzkashi field nevertheless it is a good place where one can watch the game with comfort. But an alternate place will have to be found as the game is becoming popular every year.

The 1976 buzkashi tournament was participated by teams from Jauzjan, Samangan, Baghlan, Parwan, Takhar, Kunduz, Bamian, Balkh, Badakhshan and Fariyab.

The last year's winners Balkh repeated their feat by winning the tournament and lifting the cup for the second year in a row. Balkh with superior stallions and intelligent riders managed to score most of their points by defaults of their rivals instead of scoring directly by placing the calf in the circle. Kunduz came second with Fariyab third having a hair edge lead over Jauzjan pushed to the fourth spot.

The matches started on a hot note with Balkh, Kunduz, Takhar, Jauzjan and Fariyab contesting for the top honours. Much was expected from the Takhar team which is a traditional buzkashi land but with tournament reaching its penultimate stage the Takhar team succumbed to the down of the table.

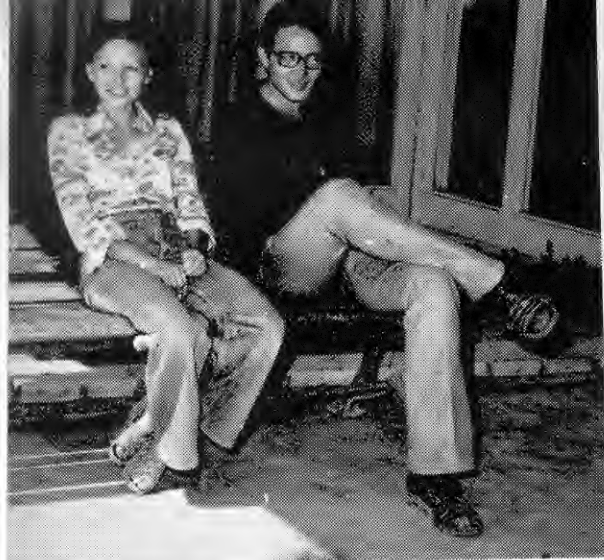
Following is the result of the tournament at a glance:

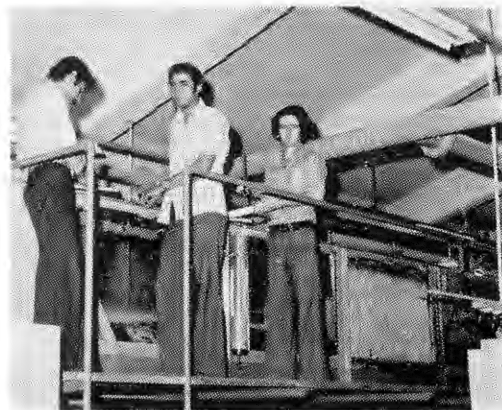
25th October Monday- Kunduz beat Takhar in an evenly matched game, in the second game Fariyab beat a weak Baghlan.

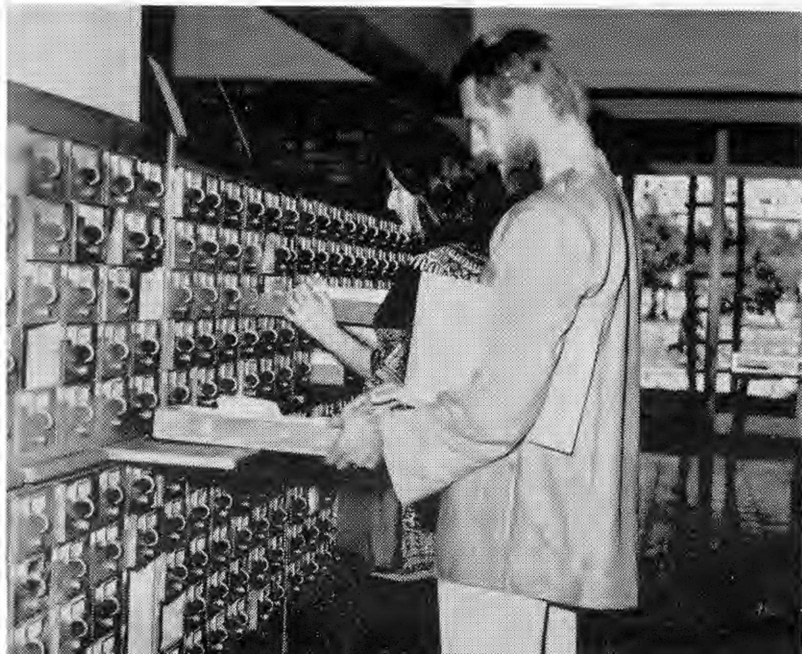
26th October Tuesday - Jauzjan trounced the famous Takhar by 34 points to seven, in the second match Balkh defeated Fariab by 18 points to seven.

27th October Wednesday- Kunduz beat Bamian by 25 points to seven making use of their lightening speed and swift grabbing of the calf, in the second match lowly placed Baghlan defeated Parwan by 14 points to four.

29th October Friday- Jauzjan ran over weak Bamian by 35 points to five while in the second match Balkh established supermacy over Parwan trouncing the latter by 31 points to six.







"Sincerity of the Afghans has led me to love this country and its people."

Nedialko, very happy with his studies and grateful for his lecturers' cooperation and helpfulness, says that he has found Afghanistan's climate wonderful. "I'll have pleasant remembrances from this country," he predicts.

* * *

"I'm going to teach Pashtu language at Yagiellonian University in Poland after finishing my studies here," says Jaolriga Pstrusinska. She is in Afghanistan for the past three ytars to learn Pashtu language and literature.

She will have the distinction of being the first Pashtu lecturer at the Yagiellonian University. She was already a lecturer of Hindi grammer at the same university.

"Linguistically, Pashtu is very interesting," explains Jaolriga. "That's why I came to Afghanistan to learn this language."

Jaolriga who likes literary works of Rahman Baba, Khoshal Khatak, and Aukhond Darwiza, considers Pota Khazanah one of the most important books in this language.

Being attracted by the beauty of the country, Jaolriga believes people of Afghanistan are very gracious.

Jaolriga has married Bohdan Bielkiewicz who is also a student from Poland. Bohdan has spent four years in Afghanistan. During the first two years he researched the history of Dari literature, the differences between Dari and Parsian languages, and anthologies of the contemporary prose of Afghanistan. For the next two years he was busy with studies on Islamic religious jurisprudence, heritage laws, and commentaries of the Holy Koran at the faculty of Theology.

The results of Bohdan's researches in the first two years stay in Afghanistan has been published in the Polish magazine Etnografia Poliska Lud. He is presently working on Nooristan dialects and on Katawi in particular, and is translating a collection of Dari stories into Polish.

"Requirements of my studies provided me the opportunity to acquaint myself with the Afghan people for which I'm very glad," says Bohdan.

* * *

Hiroshi Takahashi is a Japanese student studying at Kabul University on his own expence. Hiroshi, learning Dari language presently, has already studied the Asian history in Japan. Hiroshi, because of a great interest, has come to Afghanistan to continue his studies for post-graduate degrees on Afghanistan History.

* * *

Yoshida is a fellow-countryman of Hiroshi. Though Yoshida is a newcomer and has recently begun to learn Dari, he can speak so much to make himself understood. Yoshida, after overcoming the language problems, will work on the Afghan folklore. "I'll learn Dari sufficiently very soon," believes Yoshida.

* * *

The foreign students on Kabul University campus are making their own contribution to University's academic, and non-academic life. The Afghan students find an opportunity to learn about many peoples, and cultures at one and the same time.

ARYANA

Photo-Album





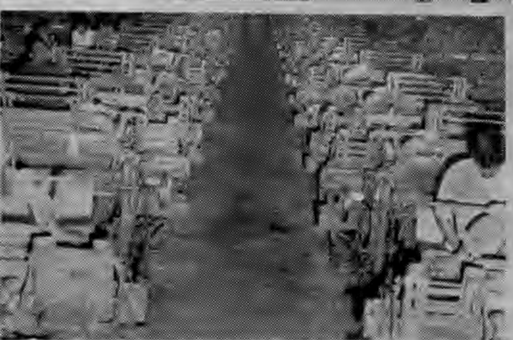
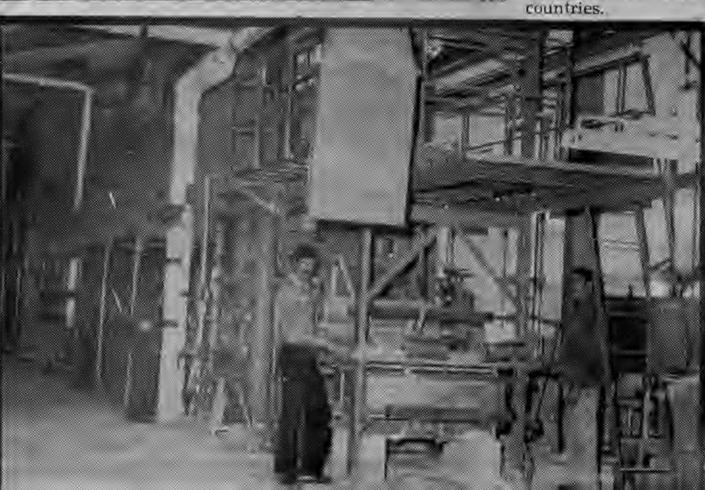
OVER THE SAALANG PASS, THERE IS A WONDERFUL NATURAL LAKE. MOST OF THE PEOPLE, PASSING THROUGH SAALANG, ARE NOT AWARE OF THE LAKE. BUT PHOTOGRAPHER NAJIB MUNES ASSIFI CLIMBED ON THE PASS AND BROUGHT US THESE BEAUTIFUL SHOTS.





Industries

The extension project of the Bagrami Textile Mill was inaugurated by Second Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Abdullilah on October 10, (above). The Mines and Industries Minister, Eng. Assifi, said the project which has been built through assistance of friendly country of People's Republic of China in collaboration with the Afghan workers, will increase the production capacity of the Factory from 15 million to 20 million metres a year, and has raised the number of workers employed to 2,800 working in three seven-hours shifts. The Chinese Amassador to Kabul said in his speech that the extension project is one of the projects included in the economic and technical cooperations between the two countries, and its successful implementation is another sign of cooperation and friendly relations between the two countries.

"SPEED AND ACTION," A PHOTO BY NAJIB MONES ASSIFI (ABOVE)

30th October, Takhar defeated Bamian by 15 points to seven in the second game Fariyab proved much superior against Parwan and beat the latter by 34 points to eight.

31st October Sunday-Kunduz defeated Jauzjan by eight points to six and Balkh routed Baghlan by 22 points to two.

1st November Monday Takhar defeated Samangan by 12 points to nine, and Fariayab defeated Badakhshan by 12 points to eight.

On November two the final and semi-final were played between Balkh and Kunduz and Fariab and Jauzjan. The Head of State and Prime Minister Mohammad Daoud also witnessed the final and the semi-final of the tournament at Ghazi Stadium. The teams were honoured at a special reception held on the occasion and the prizes were distributed by the Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Mohammad Hassan Sharq.





Farmaceutical Institutes, Their Services

BY A STAFF REPORTER

The president of the Health Institutes Dr. A. G. Motawakkil speaking to ARYANA reporter on the functioning of the Health Institutes of the University and their production capacity said, "the fundamental aim of the Health Institutes of the University is to serve the majority of the population of the country. The Institutes in order to meet their fundamental aim produce and distribute injection solutions, tablets and ointments to hospitals and other clients under easy terms. The centre producing medicines remains open round the clock."

Dr. Motawakkil maintained that the products of the pharmaceutical centre which includes tablets and solutions as aforementioned, are used by Nader Shah Hospital, Women's Hospital, Central Clinic etc. The injection solutions are used by all the hospitals in general. With the affiliation of the students health services to the university health institutes medicines needed by the students are now provided by the institute.

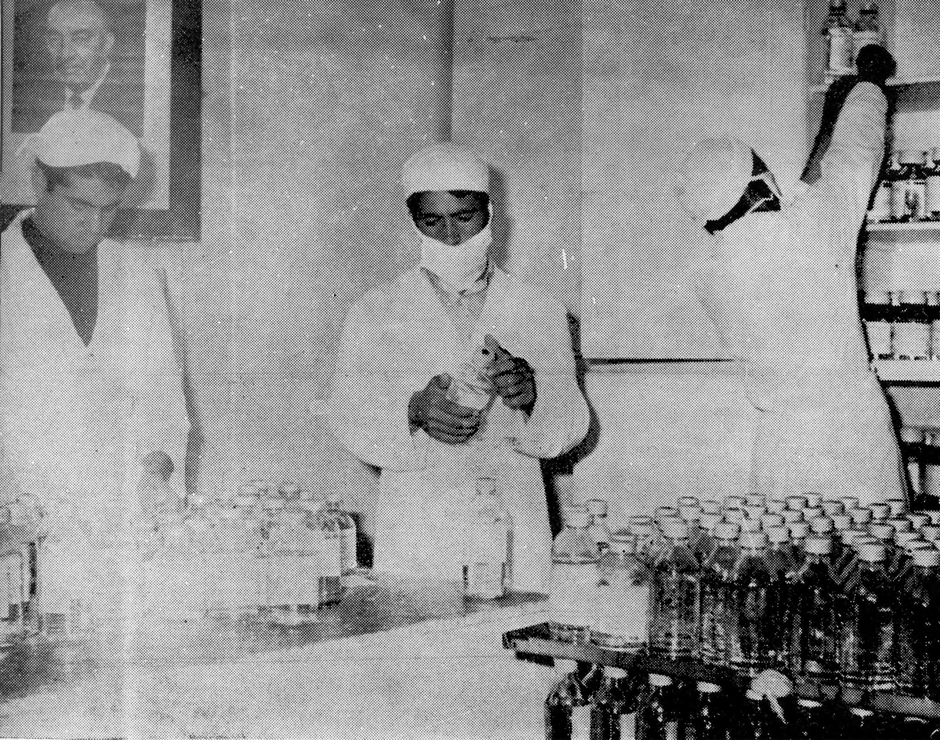
Sixty-two varieties of injection solutions are produced by the centre of which 35 kinds simple in nature are distributed free of charge to the patients. The pyrogen free solutions are produced under strict care and vigilence. The serums and solutions productions are handled by the pharmaceutical graduates of Kabul University and also by graduates of the nursing school headed by Technical Director General of the Institutes.

Dr. Motawakel said that so far during 1355 a total of 104,635 serums in 500 cc bottles have been produced by the institute, this included serum glucose, serum physiologic, glucophysio serum 1:1, glucophysio serum 3:2, sodium bicarbonate, kuhi plasm, solution A.C.D and serum salle. The costliest of which is five percent glucose serum and physiologic serums. Each 500 c.c. bottle costs 70 Afghanis.

The raw material for the serums is imported from international companies famous in their field and is processed using most sophisticated technology by proficient and expert pharmacists, thus it is no way lower in quality to the imported serums and as a matter of fact much cheaper in price. More than 1,000 bottles are produced by the Institutes everyday.

The President of the Health Institutes in the end also mentioned that the Health Institutes of the University have done more than incorporated in their development plan since the beginning of 1355. Meanwhile the government has allocated 25,000 dollars for the de-







velopment plan of the institutes and in 1977 new and modern equipments will be bought and installed in the laboratories to accelerate and smooth its operations.

The College of Pharmacy, University of Kabul, was established in 1959. So far it has graduated 180 pharmacists, in 14 batches. 280 students are presently enrolled in the Faculty's four year course, said Fazal Ahmad Ahrari in an interview with ARYANA. Professor Dr. Ahrari is the head of the Faculty of Pharmacy.

Dr. Ahrari maintained that there are 33 teachers attached to the Faculty. Twenty-three technicians are also working for the faculty. The Faculty of Pharmacy shoulders the duty of training professional personnel in the science of pharmacy, medical technology, nutrition and analysis of healthy and hygenic water.

He continued that the Faculty of Pharmacy is divided into two branches on the basis of higher teaching curricula comppatble with the pharmacy curricula in many countries. The two branches are: 1. Scientific development in the field of medicine and pharmacy, 2. Medical analysis in laboratories.

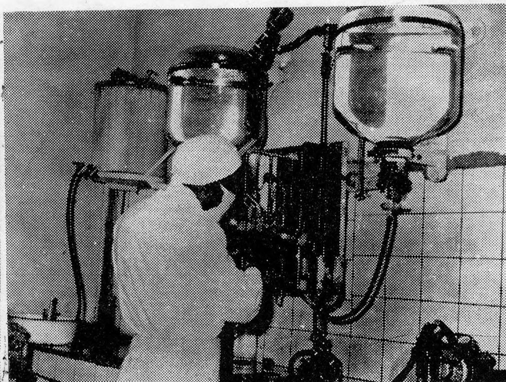
Comprehensive subjects with well coordinated training programs are included in the curricula from first to fourth grades which acquaint a student with the principles of pharmacy. During the final year the students take up a practical program which includes two semesters and during which period the students go to the University Health Institutes, which produce medicines, and Hoechst Pharmaceutical Company. The major part of studies is centered on pharmaceutical industry.

Elucidating on the establishment of pharmaceutical factories in Afghanistan, and contribution of the University in this regard he said that the University being an educational and scientific centre cannot house in its framework a commercial institution. However the University trains and graduates professionals who can contribute to the production of medicines. Meanwhile the Health Institutes of the University are playing due role in this context. They produce ampules, solutions, tablets and ointments under the able guidance and vigilance of the teachers of the Faculty of Pharmacy. It is envisaged by the University that the activities of the Institutes are magnified by pressing in service more proficient teachers of the Faculty.

Once the pharmaceutical industry comes to its own and embarks upon large scale production, special departments and courses will be introduced in the University, Dr. Ahrari went to say. "This will help," he said, "the students gain additional knowledge in their fields of speciality."

The Faculty of Pharmacy may be expanded substantially in future in order to absorb a greater number of students. The projected plans also foresee better equipping of the laboratories and further training of the teaching staff by sending them abroad under cultural exchange programs.



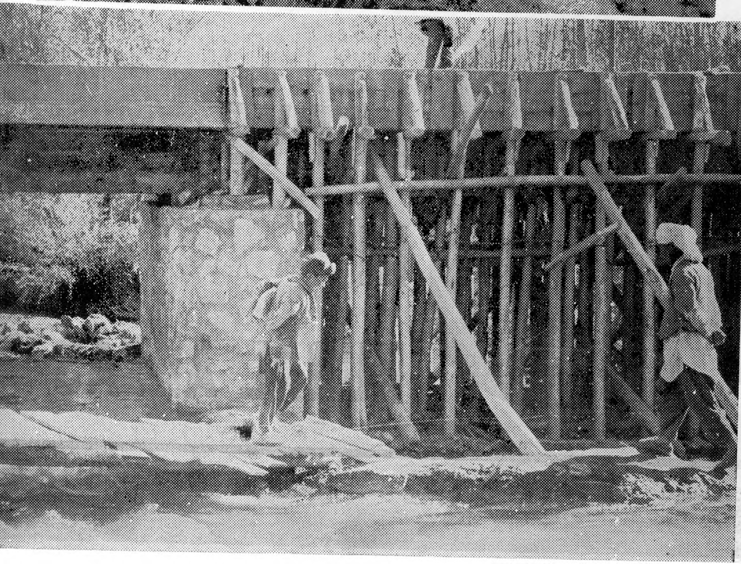




RDD ACTIVE IN RURAL AREAS







BY A STAFF REPORTER

"The Rural Development Department has multi-faceted program whose main objectives are:

1. Encoragement of the villagers to participate in the national life specially in the economic sector thereby removing or decreasing the socio-economic gap between the urban and rural areas.

2. Ameliorating the living standards of the villagers by increasing output and income through introducing modern agronomic methods and adaptable technology for developing both agriculture and animal husbandry and also by bringing better environment health control amenities to the villages and large scale cottage industry and creation of cooperatives.

3. Construction of new schools, buildings for social gathering and recreational centres and clubs.

4. The Rural Development Department (RDD) acts as a coordinating centre through which all the ministries channel their aid and development programs to the villages. The RDD aims at inspiring a new spirit amongst the villagers thus creating a new urge for a better life. Establishment of new and development projects in the villages is also one of the objectives of the RDD. It freely takes part in building irrigation systems, constructing potable water projects, repairing and building of feeder roads and culverts, etc.

In the seven year development plan RDD has an important role to play. The department will build new irrigation projects, turnups, brooks, drainage systtms, bridges , culverts, feeder roads, potable water networks, office buildings, godowns, cultural centres, and minor health centres, Dashtak Ghorband farm building, poultry farm building, feed plants, small scale textile industries etc.

Livestock breeding and expansion of agriculture are also envisioned in the plan which are as follows: establishment of rural organisation for arranging loans on easy terms for investment by the villagers to produce improved seeds, buying agricultural machinery, chemical fertiliser, plant and animal protection medicines, establishment of small vegetable farms and fruitling nurseries, poultry and high brid milk cow breeding farms, and developing of epiculture and sericulture.

The health protection program of the RDD affords special place to the following in its seven year development plan: assiduous health service, regarding mother and children, control of contagious diseases, collection of health statistics, health education and immunisation.

The fundamental teaching program forsees establishment of literacy courses for village women and girls, functional literacy courses for villagers to learn vocations, functional literacy courses for farmers in agriculture extention, functional literacy courses to teach knitting and weaving, establishment of cultural centres for villagers, establishment of youth clubs both for girls and boys.

The local industry program includes establishment of the following plants and factories: rush mat and bags, soap and oil extraction, pottery, dyeing, suit cases, bags and hand gloves (all leather), tailoring and knitting and needle work for women, carpet weaving (also for women) and posteen stitching (also for women).

Illiteracy and backwardness are the most important impediments thwarting development in the countryside and making the work of RDD extremely

difficult. Most of the people in the rural areas are illiterate and cannot imagine the necessity of a particular project. The RDD in its part does not forcibly implement any project against the wishes of the people of the area. Therefore it takes months and often years to make them understand the importance of a project which is scheduled for a certain area. The activities of RDD are directly tied to the cooperation of the villagers which is sometime not easily obtained. But gradually the villagers are realising the importance of development projects and are fully cooperating.

Since the begining of 1355 and till now a large numbr of bridges, water reservoires, potable water projects, brooks, drainages and sewers, syphons and turnups, culverts and feeder roads have been completed in Badakhshan, Farah, Logar, Wardak, Samangan, Baiman, Ghazni, and Parwan provinces, while more than 30 similar projects including building of some canals and embankments are under construction in Fariab, Badakhshan, Baghlan, Samangan, Farah, Herat, Zabul, Ghazni, Kunduz, Kabul, Logar, Wardak, Orezgan, Bamian and Kandahar provinces. Nearly 37 new projects for turnups, feeder roads, bridges, embankments, potable water, canals, brooks and dames will be launched in near future. The study and mapping for these projects has been completed which will be built in different provinces.

The RDD is enjoying aid and cooperation of a number of countries and international organisations and the following need mention: Technical Aid Allocation Department of United Nations has provided a large number of civil engineers along with some engineering equipments. The United States International Aid Program (USAID) is also an active participant in the RDD programs. Some projects in the provinces are being built with the cooperation of USAID and many have already been completed. The World Food Program (WFP) also needs mention. Also the Indian government has provided a number of experts and advisors under its technical aid program.



